



Col. Richard Moss Wing Commander

Maj. Clancy Preston Chief, Public Affairs

Capt. Laurie Arellano

Deputy Chief, Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Jason Schaap Editor

Tech Sgt. Tim Taylor Tech Sgt. David D. Morton Tech Sgt. Mitch Chandran **Public Affairs Technicians** 

Staff Sgt. Stefano Collins

Public Affairs Information Manager

Nerissa Charles/Kristine Greiner
Public Affairs Interns

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## FRONT RANGE FLYER

Vol. 17, No. 7 July 2002



#### **Scorpion Shield**

The 302nd Aeromedical Staging Squadron and 731st Airlift Squadron take part in an aeromedical training exercise at Peterson AFB and Fort Carson, Colo.

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#### Fire Fly*ers*

When the largest wildfire in Colorado history struck, it wasn't long before the 302nd was joining the fight in its backyard

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#### Fire threatens home wing member



# Wing appreciates employers, employers gain appreciation

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Around the Wing

#### On the cover

A Modular Airborne Firefighting System inside a 302nd C-130 bears the red tint of the fire retardant it delivered to fires in Colorado. Four more C-130s from the 145th Airlift Wing in Charlotte, N.C., joined the 302nd at Peterson AFB to help in this year's early fire season. See page 6 for related stories.



Staff Sgt. Jason Schaap

#### UTA Schedule Next UTA: July 13-14

August 10-11 September 14-15 October 5-6

The next UTA schedule is printed in more detail on page 10. The *Front Range Flyer* is mailed each month to all 302nd Airlift Wing members on file with Personnel Systems. If you are not receiving your magazine, check with your orderly room or administration section to ensure your address is correct.

### Trial by fire, 302nd pushes on

Col. Richard R. Moss

Wing Commander

As I write this, we continue to be tasked heavily throughout the 302nd. Currently we have aircraft and personnel in Germany and Puerto Rico supporting real-world missions. We have Security Forces and Command Post personnel deployed overseas supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

Our Logistics Support Squadron and our Civil Engineer personnel are also preparing for deployments in the near future. It would seem that we are tasked to the maximum

However, as you have undoubtedly seen in the news, we are experiencing the worst fire season in recent history in Colorado and other areas. Consequently, in conjunction with the 145th Airlift Wing of the North Carolina Air National Guard, our unique Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System has been activated to assist in fighting fires in Colorado.

The Forest Service requested that we consider establishing a tanker base (location to refill aircraft with retardant) at Peterson

AFB. Due to great teamwork between this wing, the Forest Service, and the 21st Space Wing, this was accomplished within three days and we began flying missions. As of June 27, we had flown more than 130 sorties and dropped more than 3,300,000 pounds of retardant on the fires.

We, with our friends from North Carolina, have had a significant impact on lessening the fire danger to the people of Colorado. Overall, it has been a great effort by everyone involved. We have made a difference.

Switching to other business, I would like to congratulate our most recent quarterly award winners - Senior Airman Inka Roberts, Airman of the Quarter, and Tech. Sgt. Sherrie Patton, Noncommissioned Officer of the Quarter.

They are both members of our Mission Support Squadron. Although they are the official winners, all personnel who were nominated for consideration should be recognized by their units and commended for their fantastic work.

Don't forget our Family Day on August 10. Bring out your loved ones so we can show our appreciation for the sacrifices they make so you can perform your job. Without their support, we could not continue to provide our high level of support to the nation.

Your dedication and efforts are the reason this wing can meet all the current demands. You are the reason we are considered the best C-130 wing in the Air Force Reserve. Thank you.



Col. Richard R. Moss, wing commander, talks about the 302nd's Modular Airborne Firefighting System mission with Lt. Col. Ted Wright, 731st Airlift Squadron commander, near the Peterson AFB flightline (photo by Maj. Clancy Preston).

#### Tale of Flying Fortress offers WWII lesson

Chaplain (Cmdr.) Mitchell Schranz

U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps

In the World War II air campaign over Europe, great fleets of American bombers filled the sky, targeting the enemy's key industrial centers. The brave ten man crews who flew the famed B-17 and B-24 have understood the extreme dangers of these missions, yet they flew on. The greatest fear of most airmen was not the enemy's swift attacking fighters, but the indiscriminate flak that could tear their bomber apart and turn it into a fireball with brutal swiftness.

On one such mission, a Flying Fortress of the Eighth Air Force sustained—not one—but eight direct hits. The crew knew several of them directly hit the gas tanks but couldn't understand why there was no explosion. The Fortress brought the crew safely back to her base in England. Mechanics set about to unravel the mystery of this tough war bird. They found the eight shells, three in the tanks, and opened them up. To their amazement, the shells had no explosives inside. They were all empty except for a hand-scratched note found in one of the casings... "We are a group of prisoners, taken by the Nazis and forced to work as slaves in a munitions factory. We have planted these empty shells among other munitions, with hope that this deed will spare the lives of you who fight for humanity. We pray to God that one day you will be able to return safely to your families."



B-17s from the Eighth Air Force participated in countless missions from bases in England. These missions often lasted for more than eight hours and struck deep within enemy territory. Formations of B-17s often flew into battle with no fighter escort, relying on their own defensive capabilities to insure a successful mission (photo courtesy of EAA Aviation Foundation).

# Corpion Shield

Story and photos by Staff Set. Jason Schaap Front Range Flyer

The blood was so deep it covered the floor of the aircraft and the screams so loud you couldn't hear yourself think.

That's how one airman described one of his own experiences when talking about what airmen were potentially training for at Exercise Scorpion Shield, a joint Air Force/Army aeromedical exercise held at Peterson AFB May 29 to June 6.

According to Master Sgt. Gary Shafer, noncommissioned officer in charge for the 302nd Aeromedical Staging Squadron at

Scorpion Shield, this was the largest aeromedical exercise at Peterson that the 302nd has ever participated in.

Aeromedical reservists from Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, Scott AFB, Ill., and Westover AFB, Mass., also came to Peterson for Scorpion Shield, helping in the daily treatment, pick-up and delivery of 47 mock Army casualties from Fort Carson, Colo.

Scorpion Shield offered the first opportunity for the majority of the 29 302nd ASTS participants to experience a full-scale aeromedical exercise, said Shafer.

"We missed last year's exercise because of an inspection, so it's been a while since we set up a staging facility," said Shafer. "We treated this as a non-graded familiarization exercise so

(Background photo) Aircrew members from the 445th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, prepare the inside of a 302nd C-130 for a pickup of mock caualties from Fort Carson, Colo., during Exercise Scorpion Shield, an aeromedical training event held at Peterson AFB May 29 to June 6.

people don't go in cold when they get deployed."

Airmen rotated in and out of the Army facilities at Fort Carson to gain actual field experience with casualties straight from the battle field. 302nd C-130s capable of transporting up to 74 casualties made the short trip to Carson to bring the wounded soldiers back to the aeromedical staging facility setup at Peterson.

1st Lt. Mike Savage, 731st Airlift Squadron, was one of the pilots who flew casualties during Scorpion Shield. According to Savage, who last participated in an aeromedical exercise when he was a loadmaster, C-130 crews concentrate on doing their jobs and staying out of the way of the medical airmen on board.

"We don't have to adjust how we fly when we have patients in the back because we always try to make the ride as smooth as possible," said Savage. "All the training we do elsewhere already qualifies us to do aeromedical missions, which we can be called on to do anytime; we could be going somewhere else and receive a call to change directions for a casualty lift."

Taking care of casualties in the air during the exercise was a six-man crew from the 445th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron at Wright-Patterson AFB. Capt. Cody Linder, the AES crew director, said learning the differences between how the Army and Air Force work was a valuable lesson for his airmen, but more importantly was experience gained inside the 302nd's aircraft.

"For most of us, it was our first time using a C-130 airframe," Linder said, referring mainly to the extensive amount of modifications his crew does to the inside of an aircraft for aeromedical preparation. "My unit is going to be losing our C-141s real soon and then we'll be using whatever aircraft is available (for aeromedical missions)."

Once back at Peterson, aeromedical personnel from the staging facility were responsible for carrying patient litters from the aircraft.

"Our people were really surprised how much manpower and energy it takes to off load litters," Shafer said.

The amount of muscle involved with such an exercise wasn't the only aspect of the exercise personnel learned from. Among the many requirements filled by the 302nd ASTS with Scorpion Shield was their annual chemical warfare training, including three hours in full Mission Oriented Protective Posture suits.

"We had to learn to how to go slower and overcome problems with communication," Shafer said. "Just writing up patients' charts with those big gloves was a challenge."

Like Linder, Shafer agreed that valuable training was gained by participat-

ing in a joint exercise with the Army. When the exercise lost its aircraft support for one day, the combat medical personnel invited all the Air Force personnel to Fort Carson for more in-depth look at how the Army handles actual field operations.

"We got to work side-by-side with them," Shafer said. "Everything went so well with the Army during this exercise we've agreed to call and invite each other to future training."





(Above) Capt. Cody Linder was the onboard crew director for Exercise Scorpion Shield. Linder and his crew were from 445th Aeromedical Evacuation Squdron at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. Aeromedical reservists from Scott AFB, Ill., and Westover AFB, Mass., also participated in the exercise. Behind Linder are mock casualties stacked on litters inside a 302nd C-130. A C-130 is capable of transporting up to 74 casualties. (Left) Staff Sgt. Jarrad Maiers, assistant noncommissioned officer in charge for the 302nd Aeromedical Staging Squadron at Scorpion Shield, leads and Staff Sgt. Adrian Villareal, ASTS Immunizations NCOIC, follows while carrying a mock casualty from a 302nd C-130.

#### Senior Airman Stephanie Witty

934th Airlift Wing Public Affairs (on temporary assignment with the 302nd AW)

The call came much sooner than in past years. But when the U.S. Department of Agriculture needed the 302nd to activate its Modular Airborne Firefighting System-equipped aircraft to battle the largest wildfire in Colorado history, they were ready.

Two aircraft from the 302nd and two aircraft from the 145th Airlift Wing, an Air National Guard unit in Charlotte, N.C., began dropping fire retardant on the Hayman Fire June 14.

Just over a week later, MAFFS crews had flown a combined 99 sorties and dropped 261,900 gallons of fire retardant, commonly called "slurry," on the Hayman and two other Colorado fires.

Two more 145th aircraft later joined the fight carrying slurry systems borrowed from another Guard unit in California. All six aircraft were ordered to stage out of Peterson Air Force Base, marking the first time the 302nd has ever flown out if its home since it assumed the MAFFS mission in April 1993.

"The fire has always been someplace else," said Lt. Col. Ted Wright, 731st Airlift Squadron commander and MAFFS mission commander. "So now, not only is it in Colorado, but it is close to Colorado Springs where our homes are being affected."

Wing members were among the thousands of local residents whose homes were threatened by the fires. People evacuated or placed on evacuation standby have had to plan for the worst and hope for the best.

"My wife and I sat down and decided what we need to get out of the house, what we can't replace and what we want to have if we had to live somewhere else," said Senior Master Sgt. Peter Labarre, 731st AS loadmaster. "Trying to move your whole house is impossible."

Senior Master Sgt. Mary Christian, 731st AS aviation resource management superintendent, lives near Tranquil Lake, about a mile from the evacuation line. She decided to evacuate June 18 after being placed on evacuation standby.

"I'm working down here every day," she said. "I didn't want to have to listen to the radio and have them say that they were evacuating Woodland Park and have to drive an hour just to get there and start unloading stuff. So, I just brought everything down to the squadron."

Regardless of their evacuation status, the reservists want to help with the MAFFS mission.

"It makes me feel proud," Christian said. "I am sure that they don't want me working every day but I feel like I know more about what is going on because I can get it first hand. I feel better sitting here. I know where the fire is firsthand from the crews rather than just trying to watch TV."

Labarre said having a "bird's-eye" view has its benefits.

"It's something that not everybody has," the loadmaster said. "I have a lot of friends and neighbors who call me up and ask what I saw today."

Most of the unit members are traditional reservists, and many of them live and work in the surrounding area. They are proud and motivated to be part of a mission that directly benefits their community.

"I think that it's pretty cool," said Maj. Steve Klump, 731st AS navigator, who evacuated his home in Woodland Park June 18. "A lot of people would kill for the chance to go up and see the fire and actually do something for the community. I get to do both. If I get



to save my town, it's all the better."

Wright said members of the unit are motivated, even those who do not have homes in jeopardy. "Everybody is leaning forward very, very far," he said.

"It's kind of a feel-good thing," Labarre said. "It's nice when you do for your own, it's nice to be able to help out right here at home, and it's nice that the public appreciates it."

## Fire threatens home of deployed wing member

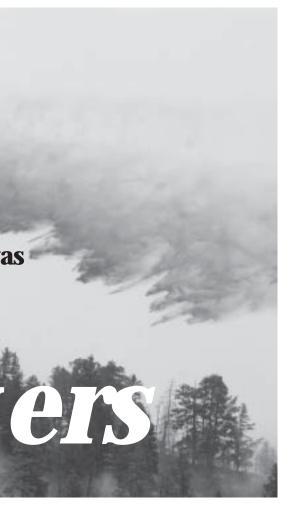
Tech. Sgt. David Morton

Front Range Flyer

Hitting close to home never meant more than it did for one reservist assigned with the 302nd's Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System.

Master Sgt. Greg Uthe, a loadmaster with the 731st Airlift Squadron, was on a temporary duty assignment transporting supplies to Keflavik, Iceland when he received an

see LOADMASTER, page 8





Master Sgt. Bob Mitchell, 731st Airlift Squadron loadmaster, sits at the controls of a Modular Airborne Firefighting System inside a C-130 activated to fight wildfires in Colorado (photo by Staff Sgt. Joseph Zuccaro, 4th Combat Camera). (Left) One of the 302nd's two MAFFS-equipped C-130s drops fire retardant, commonly called "slurry," on the Hayman Fire, the largest wildfire in Colorado history (photo by Ellen Jakol, courtesy of the Rocky Mountain News).





An airman from the 145th Airlift Wing, an Air National Guard unit from Charlotte, N.C., washes fire retardant off the back of one of four C-130s from the 145th sent to Peterson AFB to help battle wildfires (photo by Staff Sgt. Joseph Zuccaro). (Left) Not much is left of a tire on a trailer that burned with the house it was parked next to near Woodland Park, a town just west of Colorado Springs. The home was among the more than 100 structures lost to the Hayman Fire in Colorado (photo by Maj. Clancy Preston).

# Wing CC seeking input through Junior Enlisted Advisory Council

1st Lt. Brian Barker

Front Range Flyer

She's on a crusade to make sure every enlisted airman has his or her say. Staff Sgt. Kristen Lattimer is working to create a new Junior Enlisted Advisory Council. Actually, the council has been around for a month now. "But no one knows about it," she says.

"Colonel Moss actually asked for it," says Lattimer, "and when the colonel asks for feedback from the real worker-bees of the wing, we'd better jump at the chance."

The Junior Enlisted Advisory Council is designed to bring up any issues or concerns anyone from an airman basic to a technical sergeant has and present them to the wing commander.

"We really want to kill all the rumors floating around the rank and file of the wing and get those questions answered," Lattimer said. "And if it's something the wing commander's already addressed and it just hasn't flowed downhill to the junior enlisted corps, then we want to get the word out."

Lattimer says right now the council is talking about issues

from deployment procedures to awards and decorations.

"It's important to make sure what concerns our enlisted people have are addressed," she says. "We'll have monthly meetings during the UTAs where we can eat lunch and talk. We may even barbecue. Everyone's invited. Then the officers of the council will take those matters and bring them up in a weekly meeting with the wing commander."

Lattimer says everyone who fits the junior enlisted criteria will receive an e-mail or a letter at home letting them know when and where the meetings will be.

Call (719) 556-3225 for more information about the 302nd Junior Enlisted Advisory Council



Staff Sgt. Kristen Lattimer



Squadron loadmaster, returned from deployment to help the wing fight wildfires, one of which threatened his family's home near Colorado Springs (photo by Maj. Clancy Preston).

#### LOADMASTER, from page 6

emergency phone call to return home. Local authorities were asking residents to evacuate the area due to a large wildfire.

The Hayman Fire, which had already destroyed more than 72,000 acres at the time, was blazing just northwest of his home in Divide, Colo. "I was on duty the previous Sunday for the June unit training assembly," Uthe said. "My wife, Debbie, and I went to a nearby rock quarry to watch movement of the fire, and determined it was safe for me to go on my mission."

"While on a routine stopover in St. John's, Newfoundland, I received the emergency phone message to return home," Uthe said. "My squadron was great! Lt. Col. Gary Liverman, and 1st Lt. Ryan Scofield, pilots for the 731st, did everything they could to get me home. I came back a-day-and-half early, and other members of the squadron had already organized a truck caravan to help move my belongings. Senior Master Sgt. Pete Labarre took us in, and all I can say is thanks

for the Air Force Reserve program."

Uthe has been in the wing since 1989, and started in MAFFS in 1994. "Normally, we see the fires from the air," said Uthe. "However, viewing it from the ground is a totally different scenario. I went to all the community meetings scheduled by the USDA Forest Service. There were briefings in Woodland Park, Lake George, Deckers, and Evergreen. They knew what our planes were about, and everyone started clapping when it was announced we'd been activated to help."

"I'm glad we're doing something about this," said Uthe. "Most people don't understand, the Forest Service can only have so many aircraft flying in one area at the same time. It's hard for people to comprehend the logistics to get something like this organized."

This is the first time the wing's MAFFS unit has had the opportunity to fight fires in their home state of Colorado. Once activated, MAFFS units are assigned due to the severity of forest fires and placed accordingly by the USDA Forest Service.



#### New Command Chief Master Sgt. selected

The 302nd Airlift Wing has a new Command Chief Master Sergeant. Chief Master Sgt. Bobby Smith was recently selected to the position after serving with the 302nd Security Forces Squadron. He assumes the duties from Command Chief Master Sgt. Dan Maine, and will be considered the acting Command Chief Master Sergeant until he can be officially moved into the new position after finishing his activation.

#### Street name change affects unit addresses

Peterson Air Force Base officials recently renamed Mitchell St. to Malmstrom St. Addresses previously on Mitchell St. will now read as follows:

Organization/Office Symbol 860 Malmstrom St. Ste XXX Peterson AFB, CO 80914-1179

Mail will be forwarded from the old address until further notice.

#### Government vehicle drivers need to register

Wing members must be registered in the base computer licensing system to operate government vehicles on Peterson AFB. To be registered, obtain an AF Form 171 from your vehicle control officer, who checks the individual's state driver's license for medical or physical restrictions and notes them in Section I on the AF Form 171. Take the AF Form 171 to base transportation, Bldg. 1322, to the Operator Records & Licensing staff who establishes an AF Form 2296 and will issue you an AF Form 2293 (if required). The VCO must brief you on Air Force policy regarding official use, accident reporting procedures, vehicle abuse, discrepancy reporting, the use of DD Form 518, Accident-Identification Card, and the use of SF 91, Operator's Report of Motor Vehicle Accident. Also, your government vehicle should have the DD Form 518 and SF 91 in it.

#### Air Force changes serveral uniform items

The addition of Air Force symbol cuff links, tie tacks and tie bars have been added as optional uniform items. They will replace the coat of arms items.

The phase-out period for coat of arms items will be published in Air Force Instruction 36-2903, Dress and Appearance. The symbol items should be available by 2003.

#### Travelers on orders should inform ticketers

When traveling on commercial airlines while on military orders, make sure to inform the ticket agent you are on orders. If you tell them before they begin typing in your information, they can exempt you from having your baggage checked.

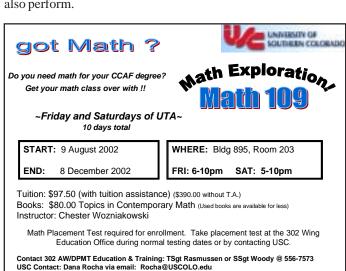
If you fail to do so, it is possible you will be asked to open the vacuum packed bags of the Chemical Protective Overgarment and the Battle Dress Overgarment stored in the C-1 bags during the inspection process.

If requested to open the bag, make sure it is done carefully and only at one end. Do not cause damage to any of the written information on the barrier bag. If the suit is removed from the bag, ensure that it is not exposed to any petroleum, oil or lubricant products, or possible contaminants.

The bag can be resealed with high quality adhesive tape such as duct tape provided the garment is not damaged. Once resealed, document the date opened and date resealed on the tape with a permanent marker and place the barrier bag into a clear outer plastic bag. Once at your destination or nearest military post, vacuum pack the suit and barrier bag in a clear bag at the earliest convenience to meet corrective action requirement in accordance with 14P3-1-141, table 5-1.I.A.2.

#### Family day scheduled for August UTA

The Annual Wing Family Day is set for August 10 from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. Activities will include: food and drinks, kids games, a dunk tank, petting zoo and a "Not-So-New-Newlywed Game." Displays will include a Fire Dept. display, K-9 demonstration put on by Security Forces, classic cars and a C-130 static display. The Peterson Air Force Base Band of the Rockies will also perform.



## **Unit Training Assembly Schedule**

July 13-14

Time	Activity	Location	OPR/Ext.
Saturday 0530 - 1000 0600 - 0730 0900 - 1000 1000 - 1100 1100 - 1300 1100 - 1730 1100 - 1230 1200 - 1400 1215 - 1600 1300 - 1600 1530 - 1600 1600 - 1630 1600 - 1700	Breakfast is served "Jump Start" Fellowship Monthly UTM Training First Sergeants Meeting AD Issuing Line Badges*** Let's Do Lunch "Lunch & A Lift" CWD Training Refresher CDC/PME Test ** Chaplains Available Suicide Prevention Anthrax Briefing Catholic Confession	Aragon Dining Facility Sandy's Restaurant Bldg 895 Room 204 Large Conference Room 21 SFS Visitor's Center Aragon Dining Facility Aragon Colorado Room Bldg 1324 Bldg 895 Room 204 Bldg 893 Room 143 Bldg 893 Conference Room Bldg 893 Conference Room Bldg 1410 PAFB Chapel	SVS/6-4001 HC/6-4006 DPMT/6-7249 CCC/6-8132 21SFS/6-6660 SVS/6-4001 HC/6-4006 CEX/6-7221 DPMT/6-7250 HC/6-4006 SG/6-1132 SG/6-1132 HC/6-4006
1700 – 1800 2000 – 2300	Catholic Mass Late Night Snack/Carry Out	Bldg 1410 PAFB Chapel Aragon Dining Facility	HC/6-4006 SVS/6-4001
Sunday			
0530 - 1000 0815 - 0915 0830 - 0930 0830 - 0930 0930 - 1030 1100 - 1200 1100 - 1730 1230 - 1330 1200 — 1300 1215 - 1600 1300 - 1400 1400 - 1500 2000 - 2300	Breakfast is served Protestant Liturgy Chiefs Meeting Catholic CCD Catholic Mass Protestant Service Lets Do Lunch! Protestant Gospel Service Protestant Worship CDC/PME Testing MPF (3S0) In-House Training Med. Liaison & Ancillary Mtg Late Night Snack/Carry out	Aragon Dining Facility Bldg 1410 PAFB Chapel Aragon Dining Facility Bldg 1410 PAFB Chapel Bldg 1410 PAFB Chapel Bldg 1410 PAFB Chapel Aragon Dining Facility Bldg 1410 PAFB Chapel Aragon Dining Facility Bldg 1410 PAFB Chapel Bldg. 893, Room 125 Bldg 895 Room 204 Bldg 895 Room 204 302 AW Conference Room Aragon Dining Facility	SVS/6-4001 HC/6-4006 CCC/6-8132 HC/6-4006 HC/6-4006 SVS/6-4001 HC/6-4006 HC/6-4006 DPMT/6-7250 DPM/6-7227 WTPC/6-7249 SVS/6-4001

<sup>\*\*</sup> Military ID cards are MANDATORY for ALL testing. For CDC end-of-course exams, a testing authorization letter is also MANDATORY. Testing authorization letters will be obtained from the respective Unit Training Manager/Monitor.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>Disregard hours posted on the door (do not take UTAs into consideration). Doors will be unlocked.

#### Welcome Wing Newcomers

**Airlift Wing**TSgt David Addis

**Logistics Group**SrA Robert Steele

**Operations Group**TSgt Jeffrey Ellis

Aeromedical Staging Squadron SSgt Nishera Sanders

#### 39th Aerial Port Squadron

SSgt Marte Buendia SSgt Ricky Dearman SrA James Price SSgt Cheryl Smith Capt Jill Wilhelm

310<sup>th</sup> Space Group
Capt Kimberly Oberly
Capt Jennifer Wilson-Kirby

Mission
Support Squadron
SrA Raul Gonzalez
AB Bernadine Martinez

Airlift Control Flight
AB Fern George

Civil Engineering Squadron SSgt Blaise Mika

#### Distinguished Visitors





(Above) Gen. John W. Handy, Commander in Chief, U.S. Transportation Command, Commander, Air Mobility Command, had the opportunity to fly a 302nd C-130 during his recent visit to Peterson AFB for Corona Top, a three-day, senior Air Force Leadership conference. (Left) Gen. Handy meets with Col. Wesley Langland, Operations Group commander (photos by Tech. Sgt. Alex Lloyd).



Bobby G. Hollingsworth (third from left), Executive Director for the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, toured the 302nd's Modular Airborne Firefighting System operation during a visit to Colorado June 27. Fred Fletemeyer (left), the Colorado Chairman for ESGR, introduced Hollingsworth to Capt. Mark Steward, a 731st Airlift Squadron instructor pilot and a commercial airline pilot, and Lt. Col. Luke Coker (right), 302nd Air Expeditionary Squadron commander (photo by Maj. Clancy Preston).

# Wing appreciates employers, employers gain appreciation

Tech. Sgt. Tim Taylor

Front Range Flyer

They enjoyed a tasty luncheon and many of them took advantage of the opportunity to ride in a C-130, but the 302nd Airlift Wing and 310th Space Group Employer Appreciation Day was also a learning experience.

Several of the employers who attended the annual event June 8 were surprised by the amount of duties now placed squarely on the shoulders of military reservists and guardsmen.

"I wasn't aware of the increasing responsibilities reservists have," said Joseph Sharman. Sharman works at Colorado College where his employee, Master Sgt. Gerald Mondragon of the 39th Aerial Port Squadron, works the help desk.

"After today's briefing, my impression is the degree of importance has increased," said Richard Drescher of the growing role of the reservist. Drescher is the employer of Maj. Michael Gleason of the 310th Space Group.

Most of the attendees took the C-130 flight out near Monument, over the mountains and south to Canon City and Fremont. Those who didn't fly visited a C-130 static display and toured the Peterson Air Force Base museum.

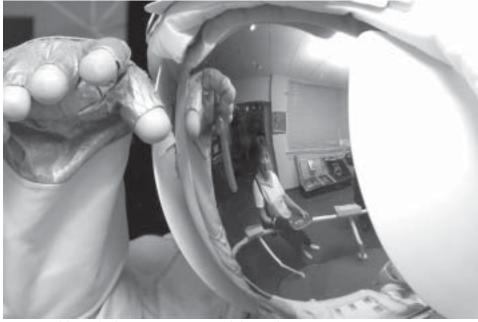
Following the flight, everyone met at the officers club for lunch, where they listened to briefings about the Reserve, the wing, its Modular Airborne Firefighting System mission, the 310th and Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve.

Fred Fletemeyer, Colorado Chairman for ESGR, stressed the importance of the employer in keeping the Reserve an effective organization.

Employers were also pleased to hear the Air Force Reserve is not wasteful of taxpayer dollars, a stigma the media placed on the military many years ago.

"I was very impressed with one of the charts showing where they're performing 20 percent of the responsibilities (of the Air Force) for 4 percent of the budget," Drescher commented.

"Our system is relying more on the re-



Juanita Ulibarri looks at an astronaut exhibit at the Peterson Air Force Base museum. Ulibarri was a guest of Staff Sgt. Peggy Logan, 39th Aerial Port Squadron, at this year's Employer Appreciation Day (photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Schaap).

servists for cost effectiveness," Sharman said.

Most of the employers expressed their support for the Reserve role and said they've been able to work with the demands placed on their employees by the Reserve.

Sharman said his office has to adjust to fill the void left when Mondragon performs annual tour, but said unit training assemblies haven't been a problem.

"It affects him more when he has to work weekends," Sharman said.

Following the luncheon and briefings, several employers toured their employees' workplaces, where they learned even more about the role of the reservist.



Staff Sgt. Augusto Goncalves, 39th APS, shows chemical defense gear to his civilian employer, Kevin Strasburg, senior manager at WorldCom in Colorado Springs (photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Schaap).

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